



How safe is your home?



*Helpful safety information and
updates on current legislation from
**State Representative
Jeb Bardon***



**Contact
Representative Jeb Bardon**

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE
200 West Washington St.
Indianapolis IN 46204

232-9991

ONLINE

H25@in.gov
www.in.gov/25

Bardon offers assistance obtaining smoke detectors



All too often, we hear news reports of families who have suffered in house or apartment fires. Sadly, many fatal fires could have been prevented with the use of smoke detectors in the victim's home.

This year in our legislative district, three people lost their lives when their residence burned to the ground as a result of a home-heating incident. We must do all that we can to end these senseless tragedies.

If you do not have an operational smoke detector in your home, you can obtain smoke detectors and batteries **free of charge** either by visiting any Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD) station and completing a simple form, or by calling the IFD Fire Prevention Bureau directly at **327-6006**. Additionally, I will be distributing smoke detectors at neighborhood meetings, carnivals and other public venues throughout the summer.

In the section below, I have listed some smoke detector safety tips from the American Red Cross. I hope that you will take a moment to review these and other items in this newsletter, and take action for your family's safety.

Create an escape plan for your family

1. Prepare a floor plan of your home showing at least two ways out of each room.
2. Sleep with your bedroom door closed. It helps to hold back heat and smoke.
3. Agree on a fixed location out-of-doors where family members are to gather for a head count.
4. Make *certain* that no one goes back inside.
5. Be sure to practice.

10 easy ways to make your home safer

1. Use the back burners of your stove and turn pot handles away from you.
2. Never leave a child unattended in the bathtub.
3. Keep cords for drapes and blinds out of a child's reach.
4. Dispose of old medication by calling your local solid waste management district.
5. Check smoke alarms regularly.
6. Bolt bookshelves to walls to keep climbing children from tipping them over.
7. Make a fire escape plan.
8. Check that the hot water heater is not set above 120 degrees.
9. Store coins in a safe place.*
10. Tie plastic bags in knots when throwing them away.

***Coins are a choking hazard. Other choking hazards for children are: Popcorn, hot dogs, chunks of meat, raisins, ice cubes, chunky peanut butter, nuts, hard candy, grapes, raw carrots, potato chips and corn chips.**

Tips on the safe use of smoke detectors

- Install a smoke alarm outside each sleeping area and on each additional level of your home.
- If sleeping with doors closed, install smoke alarms inside sleeping areas, too.
- Use the test button to check each smoke alarm once a month. When necessary, replace batteries immediately. Replace all batteries at least once a year.
- Vacuum away cobwebs and dust from smoke alarms monthly.
- Smoke alarms become less sensitive over time. Replace smoke alarms every ten years.
- Consider having one or more working fire extinguisher in your home. Get training from the fire department in their proper use.



Poison Prevention

Every 30 seconds a child is poisoned in the United States. Sixty percent of all poisoning occur to children under the age of six. The most common products involved in poisoning are drugs (prescription and over-the-counter), household and chemical products, plants and cosmetics.

Below are some reminders for keeping the children in your life safe from the most common forms of poisoning.

Household and Chemical Products

- Use safety locks on all cabinets and store potential poisons out of reach of small children.
- If you are using a product and need to answer the telephone or doorbell, take the child with you. Most poisoning occur when the product is in use.
- Store all products in their original containers. Never use food containers such as milk jugs to store household and chemical products.
- Keep the telephone number of your local Poison Control Center on or near your telephone. For our area, it is Methodist Hospital, 1-800-222-1222.

Medicine

- Keep medicines out of sight, locked up and out of reach of children.
- Make sure that all medicines are in child-resistant containers and labeled properly. Remember child resistant does not mean child proof.
- Avoid taking medicines in front of children. Young children often imitate adults.

Plants

- Know the name of the plants in your home and yard. If you have difficulty identifying a plant, take a sample to a nursery for identification.
- Teach your children not to eat mushrooms growing in the yard.
- Keep children and pets away from plants that have recently been sprayed with weed killer or fertilizer.

Legislators work to protect children

During the 2004 session, we passed important legislation to protect children from abuse and neglect. The tragic case of Anthony Bars, the four-year-old from our legislative district who was killed by his adoptive parents, prompted us to take action to change the current child protective system.

House Bill 1194 and Senate Bill 194 include several tools to enhance child welfare. These provisions will help us identify why our current child protective system sometimes fails and how we can implement better safeguards. The bills have the following key provisions:

•The creation of a **statewide child fatality review committee** with experts in medicine, law and children's needs who will analyze unexpected child deaths and find ways to prevent serious injuries in the future.

•When a child dies from abuse, **records created during the investigation of the death will be open to public scrutiny** to ensure that problems are not swept under the rug.

•**If an adult sexually abuses one child in the household,**

other children will be presumed to be at risk so appropriate safeguards can be implemented immediately.

•Before a child is removed from home and placed with another family, **criminal history checks will be required for each person** who resides in the new home before the child is placed there.

•Child Protective Services (CPS) **reports will be able to conclude that abuse or neglect is "indicated," not just "substantiated" or "unsubstantiated."** If further allegations of abuse are made, the previous conclusion that abuse was indicated will be available to the child's caseworker.

Another bill will levy **tougher penalties against people who neglect a child who ends up dying as a result.** House Bill 1245 increases the penalty for neglect of a dependent to a Class A felony if the neglect results in the child's death.

These provisions give the State better tools to ensure that **every child has the basic and fundamental opportunity for a loving home that is free from abuse.**

Understanding Indiana's Amber Alert System

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, up to 4600 children are abducted by strangers every year (about 12 children nationwide every day).

The Amber Alert Plan is a statewide notification program to help locate abducted and endangered children within the first 24-hours—considered the most critical hours in an abduction. The Indiana Amber Alert Plan has four criteria: The child must be under 18 years of age; the child must be believed to be abducted and in danger of serious bodily harm or death; there must be enough descriptive information to believe the broadcast will help, and; the request to activate the Alert must be recommended by the law enforcement agency of jurisdiction.

The Amber Alert Plan in Indiana distributes Amber Alerts using the Emergency Alert System, but also integrates broadcast fax, e-mail, broadcast station news sources and the amberalertindiana.com website. For more information contact The Indiana State Police Missing Children at 317-232-8310.

Fill out this child identity card and keep it in a safe place.

Child safety identity card

Place a recent
photo here.

Name

First

Middle

Last

DOB

Sex

Race

Blood type

Height

Weight

Eye color

Hair color

Fingerprints

R. Thumb		L. Thumb
R. Index		L. Index
R. Middle		L. Middle
R. Ring		L. Ring
R. Little		L. Little

Fingerprint instructions

1. Using a stamp pad (found in many craft stores), hold your child's finger rigid and place on the pad.
2. Lightly press your child's inked finger to the corresponding square on the card.
3. Remove ink from your child's fingers with soap and water.



Jeb Bardon

Your State Representative

Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
H25@in.gov

Prsrt Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Indiana House of
Representatives